

**Testimony of Melvin Triplett**  
**Supporting Senate Bill # 1195, An Act Concerning School Finance Reform**  
**Submitted to the Legislative Appropriations Committee**  
**March 24, 2011**

Good Evening Honorable Chair Toni Harp, Honorable Chair Toni Walker, Members of the Appropriations Committee;

My name is Melvin Triplett and I am a senior at Sacred Heart, a parochial high school in Waterbury. Next Fall, I will attend Johnson and Wales University in Rhode Island, majoring in Criminal Justice. Today I'm here to testify in support of Raised Senate Bill 1195.

You're probably thinking, "what is this private school kid doing at a hearing about public schools?" Well, I'm here to tell you that I boarded a bus with other Waterbury students and community members because we all think it's time to change the way we fund students.

My older brother and I were raised by my grandmother, and she made every sacrifice possible to put both of us in private school. Even though I get some financial aid, she still has to pay for my education. She did this because she did not believe in Waterbury public schools. She did not think that we would reach our full potential in those schools. It's not that they were horrible, but they weren't good enough, and she, like every other parent and guardian, wanted the best for her children.

In Connecticut, why don't we strive to give every child the best education possible? Even though I am a parochial student, I am here today because I believe every child has the right to attend a great public school. Every child should be viewed equally and receive fair funding. When I see kids dropping out of school or not going to college, it seems like we're wasting money. And it's not fair to me that kids in other districts have access to better public schools.

I am happy that my grandmother will get to see me go off to college, because that was her greatest wish in life, but I wish she didn't have to struggle and make so many sacrifices to get me there. I had a right to a great public education that I didn't receive. Let's make sure that doesn't happen to any other students in Connecticut. Let's pass Senate Bill 1195.

Thank you,

Melvin Triplett